



The Eagle



The Monthly Newsletter of the Federal Community

The Federal Executive Board of the Twin Cities of Minneapolis and St. Paul, Minnesota

<http://www.doi.gov/febtc/>

February 1998

Volume IV Number II



Full Federal Executive Board Meeting on Wednesday, February 18 - For All Minnesota Federal Agency Heads/Key Postal Service Officials

- Meeting Wednesday, February 18th at 7:30 A.M.
- Minnesota Valley National Wildlife Refuge Visitor Center, 3815 E. 80th St., Bloomington
- Main subject - The Federal Executive Board Planned Training For the CSRS/FERS Open Season.
- A free light breakfast will be served.



All agency heads will receive a mini-course on the upcoming FEB Inter-agency Training Council training class to be offered to all Federal employees enrolled in the CSRS retirement program for the anticipated July-December, 1998 CSRS/FERS open season. This open season offers quite possibly the most important decision an employee will make regarding his/her retirement from the Federal government.

Other items to be discussed include Federal Employee days at the Minnesota Twins and a Federal Agency presentation by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. The meeting will be hosted by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service who will also offer a presentation and an opportunity to tour the National Wildlife Refuge at the conclusion of the program.



Map and Directions

- Take the 34th Avenue exit off I-494
- At the light, turn left (east) onto E. 80th St.
- The entrance to the refuge is opposite the entrance to the Airport Hilton Hotel.

Please call the FEB office if you have any questions or need additional information/directions (612) 725-3687

What's In This Issue

PAGE 1

- **FEB Full Board Meeting**
- **New OPM Booklet and CD-ROM**

PAGE 2

- **Tom Wagner, SBA - Outstanding Federal Employee of the Month**
- **Avg. Annual Pay of MN Metro Areas**
- **Gov't Employee Days at Camp Snoopy**

PAGE 3

- **Federal Employee Days at MN Twins**
- **Public Financial Disclosure Reg's.**

PAGE 4

- **Focus On: National Weather Service**

PAGE 5

- **OPM News: New SF-71 Form**
- **Black History Month**
- **MN DOT Traffic News**

PAGE 6

- **FEB Interagency Training Home Page**

PAGE 7

- **FEB Monthly Calendar - February**

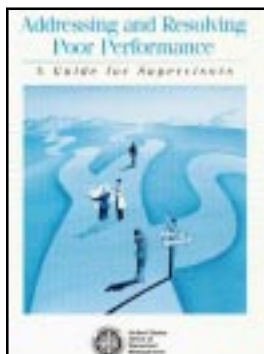
PAGE 8

- **FEB Monthly Calendar - March**

**For General
Distribution To All Federal
Employees In Your Office**

Public Servant Recognition Day

Friday - May 1, 1998



OPM Announces New Supervisory Tools for Addressing and Resolving Poor Performance

The Office of Personnel Management is offering a new booklet for Federal Supervisors for resolving poor performance. It addresses 3 different steps in the process: counseling, providing an opportunity to improve, and taking formal action as demotion or removal. The 61-page booklet is \$1.50/copy and a companion interactive CD-ROM (Windows 3.1/Win 95/NT) is \$4.00/copy. For more information call Monyca Wright, OPM Office of Workforce Relations, at (202) 606-2920 or the FEB at (612) 725-3687.





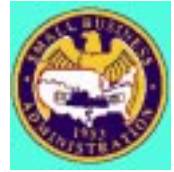
"The Best In The Business"

Federal Executive Board of the Twin Cities

Federal Employee of the Month

Tom Wagner, Loan Officer

Small Business Administration, Minneapolis District Office



When Tom Wagner's neighbor mentioned to him that her son was currently serving with the U.S. Army peacekeeping force in Bosnia, Tom thought of his own Army service years ago in Vietnam. He asked how her son was doing and if there was anything that he needed. Tom's neighbor said that her son was fine, but that he had sent her a letter describing how difficult it was to see the suffering that years of civil war had inflicted on the women, old men and children living in the Tuzla Valley near his compound. He also wrote that, in addition to all that they had suffered in the war, even peace did not bring them the warm clothes they would need to endure another bitter Bosnian winter.

Upon hearing this, Tom immediately swung into action. He organized a drive among his fellow employees at the Minneapolis District Office of the U.S. Small Business Administration for new and used cold weather clothing and for basic hygiene products. Their response to Tom's effort was overwhelming. Within a few weeks he had collected and shipped 10 boxes totaling more than 350 pounds of much needed winter wear and personal items such as soap and tooth brushes. The postage to ship this quantity of donated goods to the Army's mail forwarding center cost \$125. Funds to pay that expense were also donated by SBA employees.

As a result of Tom Wagner's concern for those less fortunate, this winter in Bosnia might be just a little less cold for some war-orphaned child, and some world-weary adult may find hope in knowing that Americans do care. As a result of his leadership, his fellow SBA employees had an opportunity to participate directly in this worthy effort.

This nomination was submitted by George Saumweber, Public Information Officer for the Small Business Administration.



The Electronic Eagle

Do you want to save fax paper? Do you have Email that can receive messages via the Internet? If so, then you could receive **The Electronic Eagle**. This Eagle has everything you get here and it is in **Full Color**. You can also forward it to your staff to keep them informed of the different activities within the Federal community. It could also be printed for distribution, in color if you have the right equipment.

Now for the technical stuff! You need to have Adobe Acrobat reader on each computer where you send it. The good news is that the Acrobat reader is absolutely free and can be downloaded from the Internet at <http://www.adobe/acrobat>.

Need more information, call us at (612) 725-3687. The Electronic Eagle is also posted monthly on our FEB Internet Site, <http://www.doi.gov/febtc/>.



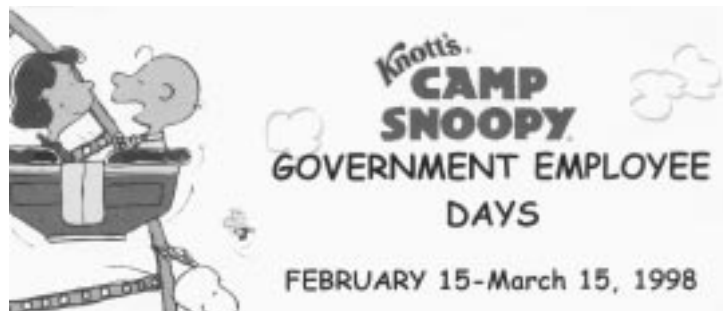
Bureau of Labor Statistics

News

AVERAGE ANNUAL PAY LEVELS IN METROPOLITAN AREAS FOR THE STATE OF MINNESOTA

Minneapolis-St. Paul led Minnesota's metropolitan areas in 1995 (latest statistical report - released in late December, 1997) with an average annual pay level of \$30,185 and was the 29th highest among the 311 metropolitan areas ranked nationwide. Rochester recorded the second highest average annual pay in Minnesota with \$29,155, while St. Cloud had the lowest at \$21,717.

Minneapolis-St. Paul and Rochester were the only two metropolitan areas in the state to record an annual pay level above the national average, according to Lois Orr, Regional Commissioner of the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics in Chicago. The average annual pay for the nation's metropolitan areas was \$29,105.



Call The FEB Office for discount coupons (612) 725-3687



Federal Employee Days at the Minnesota Twins



The Federal Executive Board has negotiated three dates for Federal Employees at a Minnesota Twins Game in Minneapolis. The Twins will sell their lower level reserved tickets (normally \$13 each) to Federal Employees and their families for \$9 each. This special arrangement is mail order only. **More information will be coming out by early March.** Mark your calendars -- the games and times are listed below.

Friday, April 17th	- Twins v.s. Seattle Mariners at 7:05 P.M.
Sunday, June 14th	- Twins v.s. Chicago White Sox at 1:05 P.M.
Wednesday, August 19th	- Twins v.s. New York Yankees at 7:05 P.M.



United States Office
Of Government Ethics

Public Financial Disclosure

Certain senior officers and employees of the executive branch are required to file a public report ([SF 278](#)) disclosing their financial interests as well as the interests of their spouse and minor children. Public filers must report

- any interest in property held in a trade or business or for investment or the production of income (real estate, stocks, bonds, securities, futures contracts, beneficial interests in trusts or estates, pensions and annuities, mutual funds,

etc.) that meet reporting thresholds

- earned income, retirement benefits, honoraria and any other non-investment income
- gifts and reimbursements that meet reporting thresholds
- liabilities (personal loans from certain family members, a mortgage on a personal residence, automobile, furniture and appliance loans, revolving charge accounts that do not exceed \$10,000 at the close of the reporting period are excluded from reporting)
- agreements or arrangements with respect to future employment, leaves of absence and continuation of payments or benefits from a former employer, and
- outside positions such as an officer, director, trustee, general partner, proprietor, employee, consultant, etc. of any organization (but positions with religious, social, fraternal or political entities are excluded, as are solely honorary positions).

Confidential Financial Disclosure

Certain other less senior executive branch employees whose duties involve the exercise of discretion in sensitive areas such as contracting, procurement, administration of grants and licenses, and regulating or auditing non-Federal entities are required to file confidential financial disclosure reports ([OGE Form 450](#)). This reporting system generally tracks the approach of the public disclosure system with some differences. Ranges of values of assets and income from assets are not required to be reported nor are interests in or income from bank accounts, money market mutual funds, U.S. obligations and Government securities. The most notable difference is that confidential reports are not available to the public.

Recusals

One remedy that is often appropriate for avoiding a potential conflict of interest is recusal or disqualification. This simply means that the employee does not participate in a matter that could affect the employee's financial interest.

Waivers

Another remedy for dealing with conflicts of interest is the use of waivers. An individual waiver of the statutory bar may be granted by an authorized official when the conflicting financial interest is not substantial. For example, an official might grant a waiver where the employee owned only a few shares of a particular stock. Waivers may also be granted to special Government employees serving on advisory committees. OGE is authorized to issue regulatory waivers for certain classes of financial interests and such a regulation was recently issued as a final rule. Finally, waivers are available for dealing with conflicts that arise from financial interests derived from Native American birthrights.

Certificates of Divestiture

Section 1043 of the Internal Revenue Code provides for the deferral of capital gains taxes on assets that must be sold to comply with ethics program requirements. Proceeds from divested assets must be reinvested in certain specified categories of investments. This change allows for a more flexible remedy to conflicts that avoid subjecting an executive branch employee to costly tax consequences that would otherwise result from the sale. In order to take advantage of the tax deferral mechanism, a Certificate of Divestiture must be obtained from OGE before the sale occurs. Certificates of Divestiture are issued by the Office of Government Ethics in accordance with its procedures and policies.

Trusts

Finally, a blind trust may be available as a remedy for a potential conflict of interest. In order to be recognized, the trust must include certain required provisions in the trust instrument and have an approved independent trustee. A blind trust must be approved by the Director of the Office of Government Ethics before it is executed.

There is no requirement that a person utilize a blind trust as a means of resolving potential conflicts of interest. Generally, a blind trust will be appropriate where the holdings are of such an array and magnitude that creation of a qualified trust would be the most practical means of avoiding conflicts.



Focus On:



The National Weather Service



National
Oceanic and
Atmospheric
Administration

For over 125 years the National Weather Service has successfully fulfilled our mission to provide weather and flood warnings, public forecasts and advisories primarily for the protection of life and property.

The Forecast office moved from the Twin Cities Airport to Chanhassen in March 1995. Major modernization of technology puts the office at the forefront of the nations weather centers. Forecasters receive satellite images at 15 minute intervals, view Doppler radar to search for tornadoes and analyze hundreds of weather maps on the new Automated Weather Interactive Processing System. The Internet homepage allows weather enthusiasts to explore meteorology in greater detail at www.crh.noaa.gov/mpx

The **Chanhassen Forecast Office** employees 13 meteorologists, 3 meteorologist interns, 4 hydro-meteorological technicians, 4 electronic technicians, 2 regional technicians, a service hydrologist, an administrative assistant and a data program manager. The office is staffed twenty-four hours a day with at least one meteorologist and technician. Forecasts and warnings are prepared and disseminated for Minnesota and west central Wisconsin.



National Weather Service - Chanhassen Office

are provided for the Upper Mississippi and Great Lakes Basins which encompass a nine state area. Hydrologic forecasts include flood crests, daily stages at selected locations, and longer time period stages for navigation interests. Spring Snowmelt Outlooks are prepared during late winter to identify the potential for spring flooding assuming a normal snowmelt condition. Flash flood guidance is prepared for the Weather Forecast Offices

for use in providing short term flash flood warnings in response to heavy rainfall. Specialized services include low flow forecasts during dry periods, ice advisories on navigable rivers, reservoir inflow forecasts for operational decisions in pool regulation, and the use of future forecast rainfall inputs into hydrologic models.



The office staff consists of a Hydrologist In Charge, a Development and Operational Hydrologist, four senior hydrologists, nine hydrologists, a senior hydrometeorologist, two hydrometeorologists, and a hydrologic technician.



Craig Edwards
Meteorologist In Charge

Collocated with the Forecast Office, the **North Central River Forecast Center** is a first echelon office, established in 1979. It provides hydrologic forecasts and services to Weather Forecast Offices, federal and state agencies, and private water resource organizations.

These services



Dean Braatz
Hydrologist In Charge

Please Distribute To All
Employees, for more copies call
(612) 725-3687



Would you like to have your Agency profiled in the next Focus section?
Our next deadline for the Eagle is March 6.

*Please submit your materials including photographs and graphics to the FEB Office.
Preferably on diskette in either WordPerfect or Microsoft Word format or
Email articles to our FEB_Twin_Cities@ios.doi.gov*



OPM NEWS RELEASE

<http://www.opm.gov/>

A New SF-71, Request for Leave or Approved Absence Form is Announced by OPM

The Office of Personnel Management is pleased to announce the issuance of a revised SF-71, Request for Leave or Approved Absence. This new version of SF-71 replaces the older one. Supplies of the paper copy of the new SF-71 will not be available from the General Services Administration for several months. Agencies wishing to use the new SF-71 immediately may reproduce their own copies from the electronic version of the form available on the OPM website at

<http://www.opm.gov/forms/html/sf71.htm>.

This final version incorporates many excellent comments OPM received over the years and meets OPM's goal of developing a short, simple form with enough detail to accommodate most agencies' needs. OPM encourages agencies to tailor the SF-71 to meet their own needs. For example, agencies may establish their own coding system for use of the "Remarks" section of the form (block #6) so that specific types of leave or approved absence requested in the space for "Other Paid Absence" (under block #4) may be readily identified and tracked, if necessary.

For further information, please contact the OPM's Pay and Leave Administration Division at (202) 606-2858 or email payleave@opm.gov.



Each year the President proclaims February as National African American History Month. This year, the theme for this month-long celebration is "African Americans in Business: The Path Towards Empowerment." We at the Federal Executive Board welcome this opportunity to reflect on the achievements of African Americans in business and their contributions to the economic development of our country.

The FEB African American Affairs Council wishes to thank everyone for their support in the Martin Luther King, Jr. celebration held at the Minneapolis VA Medical Center on January 16th. The speakers were excellent and the children's chorus was very moving. We also would like to thank everyone who donated food to our MLK food drive -- we donated over 1,100 items of nonperishable food and \$105 in cash to the Second Harvest Food Bank.



Internet website

Traffic News

The local MN DOT Traffic Management Center (TMC) network is available each morning and afternoon on radio/television/telephone and the Internet. The TMC television channel is 45 KVBM and KBEM 88.5 FM radio. The TMC telephone number is 586-6000 after answering type in code 8859. A Microsoft website <http://www.twincities.sidewalk.com/> displays the TMC map and has the capability to give *personalized* camera views. If you have any questions, call MN/DOT TMC at 341-7500.

Upcoming Events of the FEB African American Affairs Council:

Gospel Jamboree, February 20th at 7:00 P.M. at the Minneapolis Central Church of Christ, 1922 4th Avenue, North, Minneapolis. Donation: \$5 in advance; \$7 at the door.

Black History Month Luncheon on February 26th, more details are coming.

The Eagle is published by the Federal Executive Board staff. We encourage any comments, suggestions or articles. Please submit information by FAX or Email: FEB_Twin_Cities@ios.doi.gov
We prefer E-mailed material. The next deadline is March 6th.

Editor/designer: Ray Morris, Executive Dir.

Co-Editor: Margaret Geisler, Admin. Ass't.



The Federal Executive Board of the Twin Cities is funded by the Department of the Interior, Office of the Secretary



The FEB Interagency Training Home Page

Please Forward This Segment To Your Local Agency
Training Officer/Office and All Employees



Upcoming Training Schedule Of The FEB Interagency Training Council

February 10, 1998	Coaching and Facilitating
March 10, 1998	Business Planning for Mgrs/Supv/Units
March 10, 1998	Pre-Retirement Seminar
March 12, 1998	Measurement and Surveys
April 28, 1998	Time Management
April 30, 1998	Mid-Career Financial Planning Seminar
May 14, 1998	Cultivating Your Benefits Seminar
June 2, 1998	Benchmarking and Competitive Compar
June 23, 1998	Pre-Retirement Seminar
June 16-18, 1998	Basic Facilitation
July, 1998	no seminars scheduled
August 18-20, 1998	Advanced Facilitation
September 29, 1998	Pre-Retirement Seminar
September 22, 1998	Creative Problem-Solving
November 5, 1998	Finding the Value for Customers
December 10, 1998	TBA
December 11, 1998	TBA

NEWLY UPDATED - DATES HAVE CHANGED!! All of the above seminars require preregistration. Registration materials are sent to each agency head 30-45 days prior the seminar date. All of the above seminars will be held in Room 570, Bishop Henry Whipple Fort Snelling.

2/98

Local Interagency Training Course sponsored by the USDA National Finance Center

The USDA National Finance Center (NFC) will conduct a Payroll/Personnel Operational Procedures Training class in the Minneapolis, Minnesota, area April 14-16, 1998. All client agencies are invited to participate. The class is recommended instruction for payroll and personnel employees. The attached sample agenda and the following course information are provided for your convenience in scheduling participants.

The training will be for a period of 3 days beginning on Tuesday, April 14, 1998, and ending on Thursday, April 16, 1998. On Tuesday, registration will be from 8:00 - 8:30 a.m. with class starting immediately thereafter. Classes will begin each day at 8:30 a.m. and end at approximately 4:00 p.m.

Location of the training will be the Holiday Inn Select International Airport, Three Appletree Square, I-494 and 34th Avenue South, Bloomington, Minnesota 55425. To reserve rooms at the Holiday Inn and obtain check in/checkout and airport shuttle information, please call 612-854-9000 and request group name, "U.S. Department of Agriculture." The room rate is \$71.00/day and is guaranteed for our block of rooms through March 5, 1998. All taxes will be waived if a government credit card is used, otherwise you will be responsible for the taxes.

Please complete training Form SF-182 and **telefax** to Sharon Giovengo, Payroll/Personnel Operations Section, 504-255-6816. (NOTE: Block 24, Agency Location Code, ALC, must be completed on Form SF-182). The cost of the training is \$195.00 per person. Slots for this class will be accepted on a first come, first serve basis. Please include your telephone number and you will be notified of your acceptance as soon as your SF-182 is received. The deadline for course registration is **March 30, 1998**. Cancellations of course registration must be received at NFC by April 1, 1998, to prevent charge of tuition.

Should you have questions concerning the training or if you are awaiting a confirmation call, please contact Sharon Giovengo at 504-255-3565.



FEB Monthly Calendar - February 1998

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
		African American Affairs Council 10:00 A.M. at FEB Office	American Indian Council 2:00 P.M. at FEB Office	Diversity Programs Council 8:30 A.M. at FEB Office	Partnership Minnesota Meeting at FEB office 8:30 A.M.	
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
			FEB Policy Board Meeting at FAA Tower at 7:30 A.M. ITC Meeting 1 P.M. at FEB Office	FWP Policy Meeting 1:00 P.M. in Room 570 BHW Bldg.		
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
	Federal Holiday: President's Day		Full FEB Board Meeting at 7:30 A.M. call for info.	Small and Disadvantaged Business Opportunities Council at 8:30 A.M. at FEB Office	Civil Servant of the Year Applications and Criteria to all agency heads. AAAC Gospel Jamboree 7:00 P.M.	
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •FEB Public Affairs Council Meeting 8:30 at FEB Office •AAAC Luncheon at 11:30 A.M. •CASU Meeting at 8:30 		

Key To Abbreviations/Acronyms

FEB - Federal Executive Board
CASU - Cooperative Administrative Support Unit
ITC - Interagency Training Council of the FEB

AAAC - African American Affairs Council
FWP - Federal Woman's Program



The FEB Office is located in Suite 510 in the Bishop Henry Whipple Federal Building in Fort Snelling, Minnesota.

Telephone number (612) 725-3687

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8	9	10	11	12	13	14
			FEB Policy Board Meeting at FEB Office at 7:30 A.M.		Deadline for Civil Servant of the Year Nominations to the FEB Office by 5:00 P.M.	
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
				Small and Disadvantaged Business Opportunities Council at 8:30 A.M. at FEB Office		
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
				FEB Public Affairs Council Meeting 8:30 at FEB Office CASU Meeting at 8:30		
29	30	31	Key To Abbreviations/Acronyms			
			FEB - Federal Executive Board CASU - Cooperative Administrative Support Unit ITC - Interagency Training Council of the FEB AAAC - African American Affairs Council FWP - Federal Woman's Program			

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